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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

English has been acknowledged as an international language and has been used for many purposes in the life of human beings in the globe such as in science, technology, trade, politics, businesses, education and so on. English is used not only by native speakers but also by non-native speakers to communicate each other. In the area of education, English is learned and taught as a second and foreign language in countries in the world. Many experts divide language skills into four, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. Speaking and writing are called to productive skills while reading and listening are called receptive skills (Harmer, 2007).

Reading skill in particular plays a key role in the teaching and learning at all levels of education. According to Burhan (2012, p.9), reading is a physical and mental activities to reveal the meaning of written texts, while in those activities there is a process of knowing letters. Reading is a physical activity because parts of the body especially eyes are used to do it. Furthermore, Burhan (ibid) says that reading is a mental activity because perception and memory as parts of thought are involved in it. He then concludes that the main goal of reading is a process of comprehending written texts.

Reading for comprehension is a fundamental skill to obtain further academic learning success. Furthermore, Fairbairn and Winch (1996, p.8)

arguethat the readers read in order to gain meaning from a text. College students are required to have critical and analytical competence in comprehending academic texts, in searching more academic information through various types of reading materials such as textbooks, journals, reports, or electronic messages; however, not all students are good at comprehending the text being read. Most of them may understand the information in the text but find it difficult to comprehend the underlying meaning and the purpose beyond the text. In this condition, Perfetti (1985) asserts that the reason why students struggle to comprehend a text is that they lack of reading comprehension strategies.

Comprehension of a reading text is something that is hard to do. Anderson (1984, p.34) states that comprehension is also influenced by the ability to connect prior knowledge with new knowledge in order to create meaning. The students who succeed in comprehending text are actively involved in the reading processes that require the ability to make predictions, to confirm or disaffirm those predictions, to ask questions, to infer and visualize, and to monitor understanding as they read.

Nowadays, both teachers and students have difficulties in reading comprehension. It is not easy for teachers to find an effective way to teach reading comprehension while it is hard for students to acquire information and knowledge about reading comprehension given by their teachers. It is hard because students have less vocabulary which is very useful to comprehend a passage. Haycraft (1978) states that vocabulary knowledge is one of the keys in reading which involves knowing the meaning of words to find out not only the definition of the

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words, but also the equivalent meaning from the context of the text. Therefore, without understanding the words' meaning, the readers cannot comprehend the written material well.

Teaching English at Language Development Center covers three levels' Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3. Level 1 is known as the basic level, level 2 is the intermediate level and level 3 is the advanced level. All students at the Language Center of UIN SUSKA RIAU are required to pass all of these levels.

In learning English, one of the skills taught is Reading. There are a number of texts to teach in the first semester, such as narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative/persuasive text. But it is difficult for many students to comprehend descriptive texts, for example; they could not catch the idea of the text being read. A text organized with a descriptive to level structure (general statement followed by specifics) is least facilitative for the reader (Brandt, 1978; Meyer & Freedle, 1979). In addition, group discussion method which is usually used by the teachers did not help the students much to comprehend the content of the text. Based on the problem descriptive text was chosen to the focus in this research.

Teaching reading at Language Development Centre of UIN SUSKA Riau Pekanbaru is conducted based on the reading objectives in the English curriculum. It is stated that in reading competence, the students are expected to understand the meaning of interpersonal and transactional written texts (LDC Syllabus of UIN Suska Riau, 2015). In other words, students are not only expected to understand the texts but also to link them in daily life contexts and to access knowledge.

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To get some information about learning process in the classroom especially in reading comprehension, some of English lecturers at Language Development Centre of UIN SUSKA Pekanbaru were interviewed on April 6th 2016. They said most of the students' still had low ability in reading comprehension. They found that students had difficulties in comprehending reading texts. In various aspects, they said that students' lacked vocabulary and grammar, lacked interest in the reading texts, and lecturers got difficulties in guiding and managing their classes to get appropriate reading strategies. This problem is nationwide where most of students in all levels have difficulties in comprehending English texts. This fact is supported by the news in The Jakarta Post (2016) which reported that Indonesia ranks 60th out of 61 countries in terms of reading interest, a study by Central Connecticut State University in the US has revealed. However, Anderson (1982, p.6) states that paying attention to the text during reading is very important since it can activate the reader's inquiry and help them to gain full concentration.

In addition, based on a preliminary study and temporary observation on May 4th 2016 towards the second level students majoring in Accounting at Language Development Centre of UIN SUSKA Riau Pekanbaru in the academic year 2015-2016, the students also had difficulties to comprehend an English text because of the difficult words and misinterpreting the content of the text. According to Johari (2016) in his thesis, he said that the English tutor or lecturer said that the Minimum Completeness Criteria (MCC) of English at Language Development Center of UIN SUSKA Riau was B, but still more students obtained low English scores lower than the MCC. In reading comprehension of descriptive



text, more students were unable to identify the main idea of the text, the detailed information of the text, identifying the generic structure of the text, finding the meaning of vocabulary in context, identifying reference, and making inference.

Table I.1 Students' Scores in the Preliminary Study

No	Indicators	Students' Correct Frequency	Percentage of Students' reading comprehension
1	Identifying Main Idea	8	32 %
2	Identifying the Detailed Information	5	20 %
3	Identifying synonym/antonym	10	40 %
4	Identifying Reference	3	12 %
5	Identifying Inference	4	16 %
	Mean	6	24 %

The above table shows that some of the students are unable to identify the main idea in the descriptive text; only 8 students answer correctly and the percentage of students' correct is 32 %. They were also unable to identify the detailed information in the descriptive text; 5 students are able to answer correctly and the percentage of students' correct answers is 20 %. The other reality is that they are unable to identify the synonym/antonym in the descriptive text; 10 students are able to answer correctly and the percentage of students' correct answers is 40 %. Also, they are unable to identify the references in the descriptive

text; only 3 students can answer correctly and the percentage of students' correct answers is 40 %. Finally, the data in the table shows that the students are unable to determine the references in the descriptive text; only 4 students can answer correctly and the percentage of students' correct answers is 16 %. So, it can be inferred that the students' reading comprehension in English written text was low. In other words, they did not get the ideas of the text which they had read. On the other side, the students comprehended the contents of the texts by guessing and their feeling from a few words that they read. Consequently, they got misunderstanding to comprehend every text such as identifying the main idea, the detailed information, reference, inference, and understanding vocabulary. However, reading skills required are understanding the main ideas and supporting ideas intended by the author, relating prior knowledge to those ideas, evaluating, and making inferences and flexible adjustment of strategies used to comprehend the reading text (Long & Richards, 1987).

In conjunction with the above problems, and in order to encourage students to have a better understanding of reading texts, an effective way is needed to teach reading. "Reading is a field of teaching which is considered as one of the important areas of teaching" (Carnine et al 1997, p.23). Moreover, Barton (2001) suggests several strategies to be used to comprehend a text such as anticipation guide, Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA), graphic organizer, group summarizing, KWL, pairs read, Predict, Locate, Add, Note (PLAN), problematic situation, Think, Predict, Read and Connect (TPRC), reciprocal teaching, SQR3 and think aloud. Of those strategies, PLAN strategy

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and TPRC strategy are considered appropriate to help readers read informational texts actively and strategically. PLAN strategy is a study-reading strategy developed by research conducted by David C. Caverly, Thomas F. Mandeville, and Sheila A. Nicholson in 1995. They described the PLAN study-reading strategy which helps students develop a strategic approach to reading (Caverly et al., 1995). While TPRC, a strategy that makes people think and predict before they read a passage can be useful in reading comprehension. TPRC strategy will help readers have a better way to comprehend a passage, so the result of reading will be more effective (Brunner, 1992).

On the basis of the problems, the researcher was interested in carrying out a research entitled **“A Comparative Study on the Effects of Using TPRC and PLAN Strategies on Students’ Reading Comprehension at Language Development Centre of UIN SUSKA RIAU”**.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the research was to find out the comparison the effects of using TPRC strategy and PLAN strategy on students’ reading comprehension. Based on the background, a number of problems were found in teaching and learning process. Reading is a very important skill and should be mastered by the students in learning English. By reading, students can get information and knowledge. They can use reading to learn and to get information and also for pleasure.

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With regard to the background of the problem, there were some problems found in teaching-learning of reading. The problems might come from the students and teachers. However, those problems were considered important to be solved immediately. The fact was that the students comprehended by guessing and their feeling from a few words that they have read. Consequently, they got misunderstanding to comprehend the text such as identifying main idea, the detail information, reference, inference, and understanding vocabularies.

In order to solve the above problems, some questions need to be addressed: How do the teachers help the students' in reading comprehension? Why do the students have low motivation in reading an English text? How do the firstlevel students comprehend the text? Do the students spend the time effectively in reading comprehension? Why do the students get difficulties in identifying the main idea in the text? Why do the students fail to comprehend the text? Does the teaching strategy improve the students' ability in reading comprehension? Which strategy can give the better results, TPRC Strategy or PLAN Strategy in reading comprehension? Which of these strategies provide more benefits to the students in reading comprehension?

Gerot and Wignell (1994, p.208) say that descriptive text is the text depicts a special person, situation or thing. When describing a person, a text usually describes the form of physical structure, attitude, habit, age, bodily function and family. When describing a place a text usually describes a location, size and content. In the he affair a text usually describes shape, location, destiny, content, size, weight, height, width, and hence along. They add that comprehension

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questions in descriptive generally focus on “generic structures of a descriptive text are identification and description”. Identification identifies a phenomenon or subject that is going to be described, and the description is to describe specific parts, qualities, and characteristics of an object that is being described. They also explain the significant lexicogrammatical or language feature of descriptive text, they are; (a) focusing on specific participant; (b) using of attributive and identifying process; (c) using adjective to explain a noun; (d) using the simple present tense.

Furthermore, TPRC is a strategy that makes people think and predict before they read a passage that can be useful in reading comprehension. Think, Predict, Read and Connect (Haggard, 1989) quoted by Ruddel (2005, p.75- 76) is an alternative way to study reading which requires students to be in teams. Each team needs paper, pencils, and text (textbooks, primary sources, literature, or whatever). This strategy will help readers have a better way to comprehend a passage, so the result of reading will be more effective. Then, according Caverly (1995) PLAN strategy is a graphic organizer that helps students to summarize the content of a reading selection and incorporates a number of reading and learning strategies into a single note-taking tool. In the other words, the lecturer uses two strategies, TPRC strategy and PLAN strategy.

1.3.Limitation of the Problems

Various teaching strategies may be applied to improve students' reading comprehension. One strategy might be better applied than the other or the reverse.

One thing to note is that no one strategy is the best. Because of limited time, cost and energy required, the research was only limited to two strategies which were compared to see which one gave better results to improve the students' reading comprehension

1.4. Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this research was to compare which strategy would give better results, Think, Predict, Read and Connect (TPRC) Strategy or Predict, Locate, Add and Note (PLAN) strategy on students' reading comprehension of the first level. Whereas the objectives of the research are stated below:

1. To find out the significant difference of students' reading comprehension before being taught by using TPRC Strategy to the experimental group 1 at Language Development Center UIN SUSKA RIAU
2. To find out the significant difference of students' reading comprehension after being taught by using TPRC Strategy to the experimental group 1 at Language Development Center UIN SUSKA RIAU
3. To find out the significant difference of students' reading comprehension before being taught by using PLAN Strategy to the experimental group 2 at Language Development Center UIN SUSKA RIAU
4. To find out the significant difference of students' reading comprehension after being taught by using PLAN Strategy to the experimental group 2 at Language Development Center UIN SUSKA RIAU.

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1.5. Research Question

The problem of the research is formulated in the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant difference of students' reading comprehension before being taught by using TPRC strategy and PLAN strategy to the experimental group 1 and the experimental group 2 at Language Development Centre of UIN SUSKA Riau?
2. Is there any significant difference of students' reading comprehension before and after being taught by using TPRC strategy and PLAN strategy at Language Development Center of UIN SUSKA Riau?
3. Is there any significant difference between before and after the use of PLAN strategy of students' reading comprehension?
4. Is there any significant difference of students' reading comprehension after being taught by using TPRC strategy and PLAN strategy at Language Development Centre of UIN SUSKA Riau?

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study focused on the effects of Think, Predict, Read and Connect (TPRC) strategy and Predict, Locate, Add and Note (PLAN) strategy on the students' reading comprehension. The findings of the study are expected to contribute to the collaborative and cognitive strategies used in the classroom. It is hoped that the use of both strategies will improve the reading comprehension of the first level students of Language Development Center UIN SUSKA RIAU.

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On the part of the English lecturers, the findings of the study are expected to provide them with the preference or choice which strategy between the two (Think, Predict, Read and Connect (TPRC) strategy and Predict, Locate, Add and Note (PLAN) could give better results to improve the students' reading comprehension especially in descriptive text.

According to Ruddel in Brunner (2005), the purpose of Think, Predict, Read, and Connect strategy is to help students develop general knowledge before, during, and after reading. The teacher asks students to think about the topic, and then make a prediction based on the topic. This activity will be done by the students at the pre-reading. After making a prediction about the text topic, students read the text to see if it is the same as their prediction or not. This activity will be done in while-reading. Then, teacher asks the students to connect the information from text that they read and the information that they get before they read the text.

Furthermore, Barton & Jordan (2001, p.96) states that P.L.A.N encourages students to evaluate what they know about a topic. They also say that P.L.A.N provides an opportunity for students to explain and elaborate what they know or have learned through their reading.

1.7. Rationale for the Study

This study was conducted to find out which strategy would be better applied in teaching and learning process between the use of TPRC and PLAN strategies. In reading comprehension, it is very important to use some appropriate strategies in instruction and learning process in order to achieve the learning

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goals. Applying appropriate learning strategies can help to make language learning easier, faster, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations (Rubin, 1987 and Oxford, 1990). Language learning strategies refer to conscious or unconscious mental steps, procedures, techniques or specific actions employed by learners to aid in the acquisition, storage, retrieval and the use of information to regulate one's efforts in learning a target language.

In today's learning, educators and researchers are of the belief that the learning of a second language should be meaningful, reflective and learner-focused so that students can develop learner autonomy in lifelong learning. They stress that learner autonomy can be attained through learner training, i.e. focusing on not only 'what' to learn, but also 'how to learn' through the teaching of learning strategies (Dickinson, 1987; Littlewood, 1996.).

The research findings support previous researches (e.g. Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Cohen, 1998) that successful language learners are those who utilize a wide range of key language learning strategies. One pedagogical implication of this is that less successful language learners can be helped to better their language efficiency through learner training or strategy training. Oxford (1990) stated that learner training is particularly necessary in the field of second and foreign language because language learning in these contexts require active self-management on the part of students.

Moreover, teachers are facilitators in the class. The students will discover or gain the knowledge facilitated by the teachers which is more known as student center. When the students get high achievement, it is the sign that they get success

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in achieving or gaining their goal. On the contrary, When the students gain low achievement, it means that they do not get success in reaching their goal.

Because of the change, and the phenomena about achievement above some problems appear especially on the part of the students. The students must have good motivation as well as strategies in learning to get good results in their study and to gain the desired achievement in English. Therefore, motivation and language learning strategy are important in language learning. This idea is supported by Elliot and Fryer (2008) who stated that motivation, the powerful force behind our behavior, take places in every field of our lives, especially in academic life, pertinent to the success in the world of knowledge which is critical in various areas such as education, business, human resources, sports and so on. Another theory offered by A.J. Elliot, T.M. ve Thrash (2001) views that motivation is one of several important factors that may influence the students' English achievement. Another theory stated by Green & Oxford, 1995; Khaldieh, 2000; Wharton, 2000 saying that language learning achievement or proficiency has also been consistently linked to strategy use.

In conclusion, in the curriculum, the teachers give many chances to the students as the object of education to develop themselves in the learning process, including learning in the class and learning out of class. The teachers give students opportunities to analyze something that the teachers give to be solved. Then the teachers also give students a chance to be creative in solving the problems about the taught subject. Therefore, knowing good strategies and high motivation through this study is very important not only to the students as the

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object of education, but also for teachers and all stakeholders of the school to improve the students' achievement especially in English.

1.8. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, it is important to explain the terms used in this research.

1. Comparative study

According to Routio (2007), comparative study is often used in the early stages of the development of a branch of science. It can help the researcher to ascend from the initial level of general theoretical models, invariance, such as causality or evolution. In this research, comparative study is meant by comparing two strategies on students' reading comprehension.

2. Think, Predict, Read, and Connect (TPRC)

According to Brunner (1992), Think, Predict, Read, and Connect is an instructional strategy that helps students develop general knowledge before, during, and after reading. In this research, TPRC means a strategy for the first level students at Language Development Centre of UIN SUSKA RIAU Pekanbaru when reading a text.

3. Predict, Located, Add, and Note (PLAN)

According to Caverly (1995), PLAN strategy is a graphic organizer that helps students to summarize the content of a reading selection and incorporates a number of reading and learning strategies into a single note-taking tool. In this research PLAN means a strategy for the first

semesterstudents of Language Development Centre of UIN SUSKA RIAU when reading a text.

4. Reading comprehension

According to (Woolley, 2011), reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from a text. The goal therefore is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences. To comprehend the text, the reader must use the background knowledge that they already read and then recall and interpret to the understand words or sentences.

5. Descriptivetext

Descriptive text is a kind of genre text that contains description of people, a place or a thing. According to Matthews (2010, p.94) descriptive text is “a way to explain about events in or states of the world”. Schwegler (2010, p. 351) adds that descriptive text is “a text used to expose the details about places, people, qualities, emotions, moods, etc”. So, descriptive text is a text that describes the details of events or something.

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